



OFFICE OF SPEAKER NANCY PELOSI TALKING POINTS

Vote YES on Motion to Instruct Conferees on Supplemental, Which Republicans Have Offered But Are Opposing:

The House bill provides for a reasonable timeline – ensuring that the redeployment of our combat troops can be both safe and responsible. The bill is not calling for a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq. It is calling for a timeline that provides for the redeployment of combat troops to be completed by next year.

The reasons that a responsible timeline for redeployment should be included in the Supplemental Appropriations Conference Report include the following:

- **The American public supports a responsible timeline for redeployment.** In a recent CBS News poll, 57 percent of Americans favored a timeline for redeployment of troops from Iraq – including 75 percent of Democrats, 34 percent of Republicans, and 61 percent of Independents. Similarly, in a recent poll by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 59 percent said they supported a bill that calls for a withdrawal of troops from Iraq to be completed by August of 2008 – with 33 percent opposed.
- **Even Defense Secretary Robert Gates has suggested timelines are useful.** “[Defense Secretary] Gates said demands in the U.S. Congress for a timeline to withdraw American troops from Iraq are constructive because they exert pressure on Iraq’s leaders to forge compromises. ‘The debate in Congress ... has been helpful in demonstrating to the Iraqis that American patience is limited,’ Gates told Pentagon reporters traveling with him in Jordan. ‘The strong feelings expressed in the Congress about the timetable probably has had a positive impact ... in terms of communicating to the Iraqis that this is not an open-ended commitment.’” [Washington Post, 4/18/07]
- **A responsible timeline puts pressure on the Iraqi government to take control of their own country.** As Secretary Gates points out, a key role of a responsible timeline is pressuring the Iraqi government to take responsibility for their country’s future. A responsible timeline provides for a transition period – as more and more responsibilities are shifted from the U.S. military to the Iraqi military. It allows for a safe and orderly process of requiring the Iraqis to do more and more on their own.
- **A responsible timeline for redeployment of U.S. combat troops is part of the shifting of the mission of our troops from combat to training.** A fundamental feature of the House and Senate Supplemental bills is shifting the mission of our troops in Iraq from combat to training. This step has been recommended by the Iraq Study Group, many retired generals, and other experts. Under both the House and Senate bills, as U.S. combat troops are being withdrawn from Iraq on a responsible timetable, other U.S. troops would remain for the following purposes: 1) training Iraqi forces; 2) counterterrorism operations; and 3) protecting U.S. diplomats and other key U.S. personnel.
- **A responsible timeline for redeployment of U.S. combat troops from Iraq is supported by the Iraq Study Group.** The Iraq Study Group, chaired by former Secretary of State James Baker and

former Congressman Lee Hamilton, called for a responsible timeline for redeployment – suggesting completion of redeployment of U.S. combat troops by March 31, 2008. In calling for a timeline, their report points out, “The United States should not make an open-ended commitment to keep large numbers of troops in Iraq. ... Military priorities in Iraq must change, with the highest priority being given to the training, equipping, advising, and support mission and to counterterrorism operations.”

- **Retired military generals and other military leaders also support a responsible timeline for redeployment.** For example, in a letter to Congress, six retired generals and other military leaders, including General William Odom, former head of the National Security Agency, wrote, “We urge you to put pressure on the Iraqi government to take control of their own country and relieve the burden from American troops by setting a clear and definite timeline for a phased and deliberate redeployment of American combat forces from Iraq.”
- **Finally, a responsible timeline for redeployment will also allow the U.S. to begin to address our dangerous military readiness crisis.** This responsible timeline is in our country’s vital national security interests – in order to allow us to once again rebuild our ability to meet other security risks around the world. The fact is that the war in Iraq has overstrained our military – creating the worst military readiness crisis since Vietnam. As the Washington Post (3/19/07) reports, “Four years after the invasion of Iraq, the high and growing demand for U.S. troops there and in Afghanistan has left ground forces in the United States short of the training, personnel and equipment that would be vital to fight a major ground conflict elsewhere, senior U.S. military and government officials acknowledge. More troubling, the officials say, is that it will take years for the Army and Marine Corps to recover from what some officials privately have called a ‘death spiral.’ ... The risk to the nation is serious and deepening, senior officials warn, because the U.S. military now lacks a large strategic reserve of ground troops ready to respond quickly and decisively to potential foreign crises.”

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